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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1675  
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 7510  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1739  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 7324  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 3389  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 1829  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2946  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 003952

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2017

TAGS: PGOV PK

SUBJECT: NAWAZ: THE DAY AFTER THE DEPORTATION

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 3923  
1B. ISLAMABAD 3901  
1C. ISLAMABAD 3873  
1D. ISLAMABAD 3706  
1E. ISLAMABAD 3692  
1F. LAHORE 524

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (C) Summary: Twenty-four hours after former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's deportation from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, Pakistan remains calm. While opposition parties called for nationwide demonstrations, turnout was weak, and many senior opposition leaders remained under house arrest. The government's official position appears to be that Nawaz left for Saudi Arabia voluntarily. Nawaz's party filed two more petitions on September 11 contesting his deportation, but the Supreme Court did not hold any hearings due to a nationwide lawyers' strike. Political commentary so far has been mixed; the media reported that the U.S. and EU criticized the deportation as being contrary to the Court order. The success of Musharraf's gamble in deporting Nawaz may still depend on the Supreme Court. End Summary.

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Streets Remain Quiet,  
Stocks Go Up  
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12. (U) The All Parties Democratic Movement (a Nawaz-led loose coalition of religious and secular opposition political parties) announced that they would stage nationwide demonstrations to protest the government's arrests and Nawaz's deportation. Protests were scheduled in Islamabad and Lahore for mid-afternoon; however, no protests occurred in Islamabad and turnout was weak (approximately 300) in Lahore.

13. (U) Prominent opposition party leaders remained under house arrest; however, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam - Fazl (JUI-F) leader Fazlur Rehman left for Saudi Arabia late on September 10 (for umrah, according to his staff).

14. (U) Investors appeared to breath a sigh of relief that the ordeal was -- at least for the moment -- over. After Nawaz's departure, the Karachi Stock Exchange shot up by 139.3 points.

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Lawyers' Strike Prevents Supreme Court Hearings  
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15. (U) The Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) filed two new petitions with the Supreme Court on September 11 protesting Nawaz's deportation. The first petition seeks to hold the government in contempt of the Supreme Court's previous ruling that Nawaz should be able to return to Pakistan. The second petition seeks to force the government to return Nawaz to Pakistan. There were no Supreme Court hearings on September 11, however, due to a lawyers' strike. (Note: While lawyers did object to Nawaz's deportation, yesterday's fatal shooting of attorney Raja Riaz in Karachi was the primary motive behind the nationwide strike called by four of Pakistan's bar associations. End Note.) The Supreme Court plans to resume hearings-- including for the PML-N petitions -- on Wednesday, September 12.

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Law Minister Denies Nawaz Deported  
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16. (U) Pakistan's new Law Minister, Zahid Hamid, denied that the government had deported Nawaz and claimed that he went to Saudi Arabia on his own will. PML-N Additional Secretary General Jaffar Iqbal cried foul, however, and said that the government was lying. "Nawaz asked to remain in Pakistan, even if he was placed under arrest. He was deported against his wishes," Iqbal said.

17. (U) For his part, Nawaz has been incommunicado since his arrival in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He was reportedly met in Jeddah by Saudi authorities and whisked away to "Sharif Palace" - a mansion his family owns.

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Political Commentary Mixed  
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18. (U) Political pundits expressed mixed opinions about the deportation. Pakistan People's Party spokesman Farhatullah Babar failed to support Nawaz, citing Nawaz's 2000 agreement with the Saudi government. The matter is between Nawaz, the Saudis, and the courts, Babar said. National Reconstruction Board Chairman Daniyal Aziz defended the government's action, criticizing those who lionize the Supreme Court's recent ruling to the exclusion of previous court actions. Aziz pointed out that Nawaz had been convicted of a crime in 2000, and that he was therefore ineligible to hold political office anyway. Media interpreted U.S. and EU statements as criticism of the deportation because it violated the Supreme Court's order to allow Nawaz to return.

19. (C) Comment: Once again, Musharraf is benefiting from the opposition's inability to unite against the government. But the success of Musharraf's gamble may still depend on Supreme Court action. End Comment.

PATTERSON